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THREE PEACE CONGRESSES OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

BY

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CLAIMANTS TO CONSTANTINOPLE

BY

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PREFACE

THE essays included in this volume were written at the request of the programme committee of the American Historical Association. They were presented at the annual meeting held in Cincinnati during the closing days of 1916. One session was devoted to the "Great Peace Congresses of the Nineteenth Century" — Vienna, Paris, and Berlin — and with these three of the essays deal. Another session was given to the history of "Mediaeval and Modern Constantinople," and the fourth essay discusses the subject from the point of view of the geographical position of the city and the historic claims which successive national states have made upon it.

The fall of 1916 may one day be chiefly remembered as the time when rumors of a coming peace first became something more than disguised expressions of the desire for the end of a terrible tragedy. Any attempt to forecast the terms still seemed futile, because it was certain that these would be defined by the sword or by the last fifty million pounds sterling. There were subjects, however, connected with the peace which the historian

might consider with advantage. It was probable that when peace should come, whether within a few weeks or after many months of waiting, the details of the settlement would have to be worked out in a conference or congress. Quite naturally students of history turned to the records of the Congress of Vienna, the Congress of Paris, and the Congress of Berlin, with questions like these: How have such peace congresses been organized ? Who were the outstanding personalities ? Were the conclusions the result of real conferences or of secret understandings, or, again, of the skilful manoeuvres of master diplomats ?

The aim of the session was not to discuss specific decisions of any one of the three congresses, although the settlements effected by the Congress of Paris, and yet more those made by the Congress of Berlin, are closely related to the events that led to the present war, and although some of the questions raised on these occasions must be answered afresh in the next peace congress. In examining the mode of action of such congresses, the study of the Congress of Vienna is quite as pertinent as the study of its successors. Indeed, the difficulties which confronted the negotiators at Vienna seem altogether akin to those which will probably trouble the new congress, unless peace should be made on the basis of a clear return to the *status quo*

ante. In 1814, as now, all the great and several of the minor European powers were involved, and the interests of allied states were in serious conflict. And yet a study of the characteristics of all three congresses will give us a clearer image of the physiognomy of such bodies.

It is to history also that we must turn for the background of the problem of Constantinople, the most important single question to which the war must furnish an answer. This lends special interest to the essay which shows the various forms the answer has taken since the Middle Ages, as the racial tides have ebbed and flowed and as boundary lines have been drawn and obliterated. The more such elements are considered the more baffling the question becomes. This point receives new emphasis from the fact that certain statesmen are now trying to accomplish what their predecessors moved heaven and earth to prevent.

HENRY ELDRIDGE BOURNE.

THE CONGRESS OF VIENNA

THE CONGRESS OF VIENNA

By CHARLES DOWNER HAZEN

I SHALL not attempt in this paper to appraise once more the Congress of Vienna, to discuss anew the merits of the questions that came before it or the merits of its solutions. I shall merely attempt, in accordance with the suggestion of the Committee on Programme, to describe the manner in which the Congress approached its problems, the way in which it handled its business, its mode of organization, its methods of work, the machinery it employed in the discharge of its highly complicated task, which was the liquidation of Europe after a period of unexampled wars.

The Congress that met in Vienna in the fall of 1814 was composed of the most illustrious personages in Europe, with one significant exception, that of the Man of Elba, who was not invited or expected and yet whose animating personality was the direct cause of this mobilization of the world's celebrities. Such a personnel craved diversion, and the amusements of this Congress have become legendary and have been embalmed in epigram. Every day had its review, its hunt, its sleighing party, its dinners, its gala performances at the theatres, its routs and balls and masquerades. The Prince de Ligne's epigram about the Congress

which could dance but not advance every one will recall. "The emperors dance," wrote another, "the kings dance, Metternich dances, Castlereagh dances. Only the Prince de Talleyrand does not dance," having a club foot. "He plays whist." The work of the Congress was repeatedly and seriously interrupted by this riot of pleasure. The Prince de Ligne, dying in the midst of all this revelry, was fully conscious of the social utility of the demise of so distinguished a person as himself and said gaily, in the authentic spirit of the Old Régime: "I am preparing for the members of the Congress a new amusement; the obsequies of a Field Marshal, a Cavalier of the Golden Fleece." Many have died that the state might live. It was reserved for the Prince to find a new use for adversity, a new fillip for satiety.

But what was to be the relationship of this glittering gathering, issued as it were from the chaste pages of the *Almanach de Gotha*, to the business in hand? That business was the distribution of the spoils of victory, the rending of Napoleon's mantle, his coat of many colors. The task was the redrawing of the political map of Europe. To be able to understand the mode of operations of the Congress of Vienna we must keep in mind three or four facts of the situation. One was the great prominence of the four allies, the allies of Chaumont, who had constituted the essential body of the Great Coalition before which Napoleon had been forced to strike arms. These were the Four of whom everyone was to speak for many months, Russia, Prus-

sia, Austria, and England. Was their rôle to be as great in the diplomatic tournament of Vienna as it had been on the battle fields of Europe ?

Another fact to be remembered is this, that the Congress of Vienna was not a peace congress. Peace had been concluded before ever that Congress met. Peace was the work of the Treaty of Paris of May 30, 1814. That treaty was, however, signed, not by four Powers, but by eight. For in addition to the four already mentioned the peace of Paris was signed by Sweden, Spain, Portugal, and France. That treaty settled some things and merely outlined the settlement of others. Its thirty-second article provided for a future congress to pass upon the many items of unfinished business which the treaty, necessarily concluded in haste, could not determine. Article XXXII reads as follows: "All the powers engaged on either side in the present war shall, within the space of two months, send plenipotentiaries to Vienna to settle at a general Congress the arrangements which are to complete the provisions of the present treaty."

This was the only official call the Congress of Vienna ever had. Did it mean that the future of Europe was to be determined, not by the Four, nor yet by the Eight who were signatories of the Treaty of Paris and who were issuing the call, but by collective Europe, that is by the plenipotentiaries of all the powers engaged in the Napoleonic wars, which were many more than four or eight? Was Europe to be regulated by a narrow concert, or by a broader concert, or by a broader one still by

the admission to full rights of participation of all the states that had shared in the late war? Nobody knew — unless it was the Four. The matter was open for conjecture. No further summons was issued, no more detailed statement was ever sent forth as to the composition of the Congress, as to its organization, or its mode of procedure. A general rendezvous had been given for two months hence at Vienna. That was the sole and the highly insufficient preparation for this momentous meeting.

What, therefore, was not settled before the convening of the Congress would have to be determined after it convened.

What happened was enlightening, if not generally pleasing. Although the Congress had been postponed during the summer until the first of October in order to enable the Tsar to visit Russia, the plenipotentiaries of the four allied nations arrived in Vienna toward the middle of September, and from the sixteenth onward they held meetings with each other. On the twenty-second they decided upon the general method of procedure at the Congress. A commission consisting of the representatives of the Four, and of France and Spain in addition, was to prepare the work on all matters of general European concern; and a commission of five leading German states, Austria, Prussia, Würtemberg, Baden, and Hanover, and excluding Saxony, was to prepare the proposed federal constitution for Germany. The Four also signed a protocol to the effect that they intended to settle among themselves the distribution of the

Polish, German, and Italian territories, renounced by Napoleon and comprising thirty-two millions of people, the main business in fact of the Congress; that only after having agreed among themselves would they communicate their decisions to France and Spain, and only then would they listen to any suggestions or objections from those two.

It is to be noted that thus not only were two of the eight signers of the Treaty of Paris, Portugal and Sweden, eliminated forthwith from participation in the chief work of the Congress which they had joined in calling, that not only were two others of its signatories, France and Spain, assigned to a very humble rôle, but that all the other powers of Europe were to be entirely ignored.

Such was the beginning of the organization, such the initial step in procedure of the Congress of Vienna. The vast and varied diplomatic nebulae that floated over the blue Danube were concentrating into four bright, particular stars, with two dead, cold moons as satellites which were to be allowed to receive a little reflected light in the course of their gyrations. This simplified cosmogony would at least be satisfactory to its creators. Whether it would be so to all the other star dust scattered through the firmament remained to be seen. Doubt on this point was quite permissible.

Such was the situation, known, however, only to the Four, when Talleyrand reached Vienna, on September 24. He suspected, long before he knew, that the allies would seek to prevent France from sitting in the meetings that were to decide the

weighty matters of the day. But he had no notion of acquiescing in any such arrangement. As he himself expressed it, he was " both able and knew how to sit." But how to make the lordly tetrarchy admit him to the room and give him a seat was a problem. His treatment of it was a masterpiece of diplomatic art.

As the opening of the Congress had been publicly announced for October first, it was considered necessary to convoke the signers of the Treaty of Paris, who had said in that treaty that there would be a Congress. Metternich accordingly invited them to meet at his house on September 30. But he invited, not the Eight who had signed the Treaty, but only six of them, leaving out Portugal and Sweden. This preparatory meeting was quite sensational and had its influence upon the course of the Congress. Talleyrand needed all his aplomb (and he had it all). No sooner was he seated — and he took particular pains to take a good seat near the head of the table — than he supported a protest which Portugal had just sent in against the failure to ask her to the conference, she being one of the signers of the Treaty of Paris. The Swedish plenipotentiary had not yet arrived in Vienna and was therefore not in a position to protest.

After giving this slight scratch, Talleyrand rested. " The object of today's conference," said Lord Castlereagh, addressing Talleyrand, "is to make you acquainted with what the four Courts have done since we have been here." Then, addressing Metternich, Castlereagh said: " You have

the protocol." "M. de Metternich then handed me a paper," writes Talleyrand to Louis XVIII, "signed by him, Count Nesselrode, Lord Castlereagh, and Prince Hardenberg." In this protocol the word 'allies' occurred in every paragraph. "I pointed out the word, and said that the use of it placed me under the necessity of asking where we were, whether we were still at Chaumont or at Laon, whether peace had not been made, whether there was any quarrel, and with whom."[1] "Allies," continued Talleyrand, "allies against whom? Not against Napoleon? He is on the island of Elba. Surely not against the king of France? He is a guarantor of the duration of the peace. Gentlemen, let us speak frankly. If there are still Allied Powers then I am an intruder here."[2]

They answered that they did not insist upon the word, that they had only employed it for brevity's sake. On which Talleyrand impressed upon them that, however valuable brevity might be, it ought not to be purchased at the expense of accuracy. He added that anything that had been done between May 30, when by the Treaty of Paris the Congress had been announced, and October first, when it ought to meet, was foreign to him and did not exist for him.

The blighting breath of this caustic criticism withered the flowering protocol and any other

[1] Pallain, *The Correspondence of Talleyrand and Louis XVIII* (authorized American ed., 1881), Letter of October 4, 1814.

[2] Sorel, *L'Europe et la Révolution Française*, pt. viii (5th ed., 1904), p. 385.

arrangements that the Four might have concluded between the two terminal dates. The answer of the plenipotentiaries was, says Talleyrand, " that they cared so little for the paper in question, that they asked nothing better than to withdraw it . . . M. de Metternich laid it aside, and there was no more about it."

After having abandoned this document, the Four produced another, providing that, if France and Spain should agree with them, then two committees should be appointed to consider and determine the subjects before the Congress, and that after the committees had completed their tasks the Congress should then be assembled for the first time and the whole submitted to its sanction.

The purpose and obvious effect of this plan was to render the Four masters of the Congress. France and Spain would never be more than two to four, even if they were agreed on everything. Talleyrand immediately expressed his opinion, to the effect that the idea of arranging everything before convening the Congress was a novel one to him, that they proposed to finish where he had thought it necessary to begin, that probably the power which it was proposed to confer upon the Six could not be given to them except by the Congress as a whole; and he asked why the Congress could not be assembled at once, what were the difficulties in the way, a question that led to a general and somewhat testy conversation. Talleyrand was supported throughout by Labrador, the representative of Spain.

After this conversation a two days' adjournment was taken. "The intervention of Talleyrand and of Labrador," wrote Friedrich Gentz in his diary, "has frightfully deranged our plans. They have protested against the form we have adopted. They lectured us well for two hours. It was a scene that I shall never forget." [1]

Having annoyed his fellow diplomatists sufficiently in the famous conference, Talleyrand proceeded to annoy them still more by sending to each of the five on the following day a formal note to the effect that in his opinion the eight powers which had signed the Treaty of Paris were competent to prepare the preliminary programme of the Congress and to suggest to it the committees that it would be desirable to have, but that their competence did not extend any further; "that not being the Congress, but only a portion of the Congress, to attribute to themselves a power which could only belong to the entire Congress would be a usurpation; . . . that the difficulty which attended the meeting of the Congress was not of a nature to diminish with time;" that, in short, "the Eight Powers should address themselves without delay to the preliminary questions to be decided by the Congress, so that it might be promptly called together, and those questions submitted to it." [2]

The plenipotentiaries of the Four at once fell upon Talleyrand with reproaches for having sent the note to them. They would have preferred

[1] Gentz, *Tagebücher*, i, p. 312.

[2] Pallain, Letter of October 4, 1814.

that the conference should be one of conversations merely, of which no trace would remain. They criticized especially his giving a formal and official character to the proceedings of the session by signing the note. Moreover, a note requires an answer.

To these criticisms "I replied," says the bland ex-bishop, "that, as they wrote and signed amongst themselves, I thought that I too must write and sign. I concluded from this that my note had embarrassed them not a little."

His conclusion was correct.

On October 3, there was another conference with Metternich, at which Metternich asked Talleyrand to withdraw his note, and insinuated once more that everything ought to be regulated by the Four. "I replied that I could not. 'Then we must answer you,' said M. de Metternich to me. 'If you will kindly do so,' I replied. 'I should,' he resumed, 'be of opinion that we ought to settle our affairs by ourselves, meaning by *us* the Four Courts.' I answered unhesitatingly, 'If you take the question that way, I am altogether your man; I am quite ready, and ask nothing better.' 'What do you mean?' said he. 'This; it is very simple,' I replied: 'I shall take no more part in your conferences; I shall be nothing here but a member of the Congress, and I shall wait until it is opened.' . . . 'How can the Congress be assembled,' said M. de Metternich, 'when nothing is ready to lay before it?' 'Well, then,' I replied, to show that I did not wish to make difficulties, and was prepared to agree

to anything that did not clash with the principles from which I could not depart, 'since nothing is ready as yet for the opening of the Congress . . . let it be put off for a fortnight or three weeks. I consent to that, but on two conditions: one is that you summon it for a fixed day; the other is that in the note of convocation you lay down the rule for admission to it." [1]

A few days later Gentz, Metternich's right-hand man, succeeded in composing a draft convoking the Congress for November 1. This draft was in most respects similar to that which Talleyrand had suggested. The representatives of the Six Powers met on October 8, at Metternich's house, to consider it. Talleyrand accepted Gentz's plan for the opening of the Congress, and also the idea of preparatory conferences to be held before the opening — since he was now sure of admission himself and since now the Four renounced the right to settle everything among themselves alone. But he demanded that at the point where it was stated that the opening of the Congress should occur November 1, the following words should be added: "and shall then be conducted in conformity with the principles of public law." This proposition aroused a tempest which shows us the spirit in which these men of the Congress approached their work. "At these words," wrote Talleyrand, "a tumult of which it is difficult to form an idea arose. Prince Hardenberg, standing up, with his clenched hands on the table in an

[1] Pallain, Letter of October 9, 1814.

almost threatening attitude, and shouting, as those who are afflicted with deafness so often do, said, in stuttering agitation, 'No, sir, *public law* is a useless phrase. Why say that we shall act according to public law? That goes without saying.' I replied: 'If it goes without saying, it will go even better, if said.' M. Humboldt exclaimed: 'What has public law to do here?' 'This,' I answered: 'that it sends you here,'" by which Talleyrand delicately referred to the fact that if it had not been for what remained of respect for public law Prussia would have been completely effaced from the map of Europe at Tilsit.[1]

After this conference neither the Six nor the Eight met for some time. The Four were trying, not in formal meetings, but by negotiation with each other, to arrange the division of Poland and Saxony, the thorniest crux of all the affairs that would have to be settled. But instead of attaining a solution, they only found their relations becoming more and more suspicious and strained. Even the sole committee which had thus far been instituted, that for preparing a constitution for Germany, a committee, as we have seen, appointed by the Four, broke up after a few sessions because of a split among its members over this all-determining question. The representatives of Bavaria and Würtemberg declined to have anything to do with the committee until the preservation of Saxony was assured. As a result no more sessions of the Ger-

[1] Pallain, Letter of October 9, 1814; Broglie, *Mémoires du Prince de Talleyrand*, ii, pp. 341–347.

man Committee were held for five months, and when they were finally resumed it was under very changed conditions.

The Congress was having notable difficulty in getting under way. It was drifting and drifting toward rocks. Everyone was apprehensive. Was Europe about to be duped once more? To reassure her it was necessary, whether they wished it or not, for the Powers to adopt some definite mode of procedure for the Congress. All that had been done thus far had been to extract from the Six a manifesto convoking it and a promise that, when convened, it should act in accordance with public law. Meanwhile November was steadily approaching, when, according to announcement, the Congress was to be opened. On October 30, the representatives of the Eight met at Metternich's house. They elected Metternich president and Gentz secretary, and they chose by lot a committee on credentials, consisting of the representatives of England, Russia, and Prussia. On November 1, a public declaration was made that the Committee on Credentials would meet on November 3, and that after the completion of its work the Committee of the Eight would formulate proposals for the further progress of the Congress.

But November came and went, as did six other successive months, and the Congress was not opened. In fact it was never opened. In fact there was no Congress — there was simply a collection of negotiators of every grade, resident for the time being in the city of Vienna. There was

never any verification of credentials, never any official and authoritative list of members. The members of this imaginary Congress never met together in the same room. When historians speak of Metternich as president of the Congress of Vienna and Gentz as its secretary, they use language inaccurately. They were president and secretary of the Committee of the Eight Powers which had signed the Treaty of Paris, nothing more. No plenary session was ever held.

Yet the work for which these men had come together was gradually accomplished. They did not assemble day after day and deliberate upon the many problems pressing for solution. Indeed, as has been said, they never once assembled. But during these months from September to June a very large number of treaties were made between the various states, and these were brought together in their essential features in the Final Act of June 9, which was hurriedly patched together a few days before the battle of Waterloo. Everything was arranged outside, in the intimate interviews of sovereigns and diplomats, and in the special committees that were in one way and another gradually appointed.

Of organization, then, according to the modern idea of an international assembly, there was, in the case of the Congress of Vienna, strictly speaking, no trace. There was nothing in its method of discussing and settling questions that differentiated its procedure from ordinary diplomatic negotiations between nations, except the proximity of the

negotiators. At one of the sessions of the Eight Powers, Metternich declared that the Congress "was not a congress; that its opening was not, properly speaking, an opening at all; that the commissions were not commissions; that in the assembly of the powers at Vienna the only advantage they had to note was that of a Europe without distances."[1]

The negotiations carried on at Vienna by this Europe from which distance had been eliminated were long and exceedingly complicated. In the course of them we encounter meetings of the Four, of the Six, of the Eight. But the really dominating group was neither of these but was the Committee of the Five. In other words, the Four who had wished and intended to do everything without France found that they were unable to do anything without her. They were obliged in the end, although most reluctantly, to admit her formally even to their sessions on the Saxon-Polish questions. Even after these were settled the Committee of the Five absorbed all important matters, and was, in the words of Friedrich Gentz, till the last moment "the real and only Congress." And the reason was that there were five Great Powers in Europe and no more. The map of Europe was redrawn by them because they had the men and the resources, in other words, force. As for the rest, the minor and secondary powers, they were nowhere, they flitted ineffectually in the dismal, dreary, outer limbo of the neglected.

[1] *Memoirs of Talleyrand* (English translation, 1891–92), ii, p. 295.

When on June 9, 1815, the plenipotentiaries of the Eight Powers, signatories of the Treaty of Paris, were convened for the purpose of formally approving the Final Act of the Congress, Labrador, the Spanish representative, refused to sign, giving as his reasons that only a small proportion of the subjects dealt with in the Final Act had ever been reported in the sittings of the Committee of the Eight, and that a fraction of these Powers ought not to be permitted to settle the affairs of all Europe, merely summoning the rest to accord or refuse their signatures. This was practically the same idea as that of Hans von Gagern, representing the Netherlands, who, expressing his dissatisfaction with the decision concerning that country, and being informed by Wellington that it had been made by 'the Great Powers,' retorted that "of this newly invented term, 'the Great Powers,' he knew neither the precise import nor the intention." If this was Gagern's condition, it behooved him, as a practical diplomat, involved in the high intriguing of the European stage, speedily to learn the new terminology. For the Congress of Vienna, by its conduct and procedure, proved, beyond the possibility of doubt or cavil, that the settlement of the affairs of Europe belonged to the Great Powers, and that the other states had only to decide whether they would accept such settlement or not. And if they would not, what of it ? was manifestly the thought in the mind of the predominating pentarchy.

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THE CONGRESS OF PARIS

THE CONGRESS OF PARIS

By WILLIAM ROSCOE THAYER

THE watchword of the Congress of Vienna was 'legitimacy.' The envoys of the Powers labored first to punish France, whom they regarded as the hotbed of revolution, the enemy of mankind and the cause of the wars which had devastated Europe for over twenty years. They deprived her of her territorial conquests, put a ban on the Bonapartes, recalled the Bourbon king, Louis XVIII, and trusted to the natural numbing quality of reaction to enervate, and so to undo, the spirit of liberty which caused the Revolution. The spirit with which they intended to replace it, not only in France but throughout the world, was that of legitimacy — a mouth-filling word whose meaning varied according to the greed of those who used it. In theory, it required that governments and dynasties should be restored to their condition before the Revolution. In practice, however, the large Powers helped themselves to such parts of the small states as they coveted: thus, Prussia got half of Saxony, Austria took northern Italy and Illyria; Russia annexed the grand duchy of Warsaw. But when once the spoils had been assigned and assimilated, the spirit of legitimacy, like a fixative spray, held together the members of the revived old régime.

Restoration, they called this process, and many of the monarchs and their ministers, and the privileged classes with whose interests their own were interlocked, sincerely believed that the old could be restored, and that, with vigilance, it could be protected indefinitely against change, especially against any maniacal outburst such as had followed the French groping towards liberty and social justice in 1789. This creed the diplomats at Vienna wrote for exhausted Europe; and they added postscripts to it in the second Treaty of Paris and in the mystical pact of the Holy Alliance.

Forty years passed, before the masters of Europe assembled in another congress to frame another international agreement: for in spite of the principle of legitimacy, in spite also of reaction carried to almost incredible excesses, change had crept in and undermined the European system which Metternich constructed at Vienna. The revolutions of 1848 exploded — one might suppose forever — the delusion that any human compact or institution can escape the action of change, that is, of evolution.

The immediate origin of the Congress of 1856 was the Crimean War — a venture entered upon by France and England to protect Turkey from the encroachments of Russia. To keep Russia out of the Mediterranean had been for a long time the pet monomania of English statesmen, and they were glad enough to find in the French emperor, Napoleon III, an ally who would fight their battles with them. The direct interests of France did not

call her to make war in behalf of the Sultan and of England, but the purposes of Napoleon III did. He — the product of revolution, the embodied denial of legitimacy — could have no better sponsor among the legitimate governments of Europe than the British government and Queen Victoria. Her personal character was so highly respected, that approval by her would have sufficed to disinfect, and to restore to decent society, even so great a rascal as Victor Hugo and Kinglake regarded Louis Napoleon. Besides the very evident desirability of appearing as the accepted ally of England as a means of personal rehabilitation, the French emperor had other reasons for embarking on the Crimean War. A Napoleon must maintain the military prestige of the Great Napoleon. The uncle had failed to defeat Russia; the putative nephew would therefore win all the greater renown if he succeeded where his uncle failed. England had sworn eternal hostility to the Great Napoleon, and through her invincible tenacity, having supported coalition after coalition against him for twenty years, she had crushed him at Waterloo. For Napoleon III to use England as a tool for humbling Russia, would be in a sense to overcome England.

The Anglo-French allies invaded the Crimea in September, 1854, they fought the battles of the Alma, Balaklava, and Inkerman that autumn, and invested Sebastopol. During the winter they died like flies of disease, and they succeeded in taking Sebastopol only on September 8, 1855. Then

Napoleon was ready to stop. The adventure had cost far more than he expected, his people were murmuring, and he knew that further prestige must be bought at higher rates. England — or, at least, Queen Victoria and the Court — on the other hand, desired to go on. The campaign had brought Britain so little glory that they wished for an opportunity to redeem British reputation.

France, however, and some of the neutral powers were determined on peace. Austria, who had refused to join the allies in their offensive war, nevertheless had favored them rather than Russia, and she drew up — with France's connivance — an ultimatum proposing to Russia that a peace congress should be held. The 'Four Points' of the ultimatum referred (1) to the Danubian principalities and Russian protectorate. (2) To the freedom of the Danube. (3) To the neutralization of the Black Sea. (4) To the rights and protection of the Christian subjects of the Porte.[1] Russia consented — reluctantly; England agreed — still more reluctantly.

The parties to the Congress fixed on Paris for its place and February 25, 1856, for its opening. A strong pro-Russian sentiment prevailed there, even among high French officials, but as Lord Clarendon, the British foreign secretary, wrote the queen, it would greatly aid them to have Lord Cowley, the British ambassador to France, on the spot, and the French emperor, on whom the English must rely, within easy reach. Clarendon

[1] Text in Gourdon, *Congrès de Paris*, pp. 344–346.

rightly foresaw that the emperor would exert a controlling influence over the proceedings.

To be on the ground early, Clarendon arrived in Paris on February 17 — but the Russians had preceded him — and that evening he dined at the Tuileries. He made it his business to control the controller of the Congress. The emperor listened sympathetically, professed the utmost concern and desire that the Anglo-French alliance should not be broken, and spoke with true French gallantry of the charming letter the queen had sent him. A few days' orientation, however, convinced Clarendon that the emperor stood almost alone, the mass of opinion among French politicians and publicists, of the Bourse and of the Court, being rather in favor of treating the Russians gently.

On the appointed day the members of the Congress met at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. They came in their street clothes: Cavour and Villamarina were first — punctual to the minute. The others soon followed and assembled in the Hall of the Ambassadors, where full length portraits of Napoleon III and Empress Eugénie looked down on them from the walls, and a bust of Napoleon I, as of the genius of the place, seemed to preside from one of the mantelpieces. At the great round table, covered with green velvet, were placed twelve armchairs, and nearby stood an oblong table for the secretary. In adjoining rooms, the envoys could take coffee or tea, or could walk about and smoke, or otherwise enjoy a respite from the strain of business.

On motion of Count Buol, Count Walewski, the French foreign minister, was unanimously chosen president of the Congress — an obviously proper choice, since the Congress was to sit in the French capital. On Walewski's suggestion, Count Benedetti served as general secretary and protocolist. Having pledged themselves to absolute secrecy, the envoys arranged to meet every other day, usually in the afternoon,[1] and they accepted the protocol of the 'Four Points,' signed at Vienna on February 1, as the basis of their discussion. Their first important act was to conclude an armistice, to last until March 31, or during the sitting of the Congress.

To obviate sensitiveness over precedence, the envoys sat round the green table in the alphabetical order in French [2] of the countries they represented. In 1856, they were a distinguished group of men, although few of them are now remembered, and only one ranks among the world's master statesmen.

The president, Count Alexander Colonna Walewski, was the illegitimate son of Napoleon I and of the Polish Countess Walewska. Like other Napoleonids, he emerged from obscurity when Louis Napoleon became president, and rose by rapid promotion from small diplomatic posts to be ambassador at London. Having negotiated the alliance between England and France, he returned

[1] This schedule was not carried out. Sometimes, the meetings came every day; sometimes, two or three days intervened.

[2] Autriche, France, Grande Bretagne, Russie, Sardaigne (Piedmont), Turquie.

to Paris to be minister of foreign affairs. He carried on an underhand policy, conflicting with that of the emperor; but when brought to book, he did the emperor's bidding. At the Congress, he posed as the arbiter of the French decision, but he fooled nobody. A mediocre man, like most of the accomplices of the *coup d'état*, he had the art of getting on, and like them he was popularly believed to use his official knowledge in speculating on the stock market — a suspicion which the historian will find it as easy to believe as it is hard to verify.

Baron Bourqueney, Walewski's colleague, had been ambassador at Vienna since 1853. As he belonged to the old nobility, the upstart Emperor repaid his loyalty by pushing him to the front. So far as appears, however, he possessed only mediocre talents as a diplomat; and his infatuation for Hapsburg policies and for Viennese society caused him to be called 'more Austrian than the Austrians.'

England, on the other hand, sent two really strong representatives. First, George William Villiers, the fourth Earl of Clarendon, foreign secretary, experienced in diplomacy, on most occasions clear-headed and far-seeing, lacking only the gift of party command in order to reach the premiership, but fully equal, as it seems to me, to Palmerston and Lord John Russell in his mastery of international relations. The grand manner, which he came by naturally, added impressiveness to his personal intercourse. He was easily the fore-

most envoy at the Congress, which he attended unwillingly, as he believed that the terms to be won could not possibly satisfy the English. "The negotiations," he wrote Henry Reeve, "must be the grave of the negotiators' reputation."

His second, Lord Cowley, was also a British thoroughbred, the nephew of the Duke of Wellington. Having begun his diplomatic career at the age of twenty, he had reached the crowning position — the Paris embassy — in 1852, and had won the emperor's esteem, if not his confidence: for nobody dares say in whom Napoleon III really confided.

Of the Austrians, Count Buol-Schauenstein, premier and minister of foreign affairs, was a typical Teuton, arrogant, mannerless, and haughty, who knew so little of human nature that he supposed that other men are conciliated by cuffs and condescension. Bismarck, who knew him, summed him up in a sentence: "If I could be as great for a single hour as Buol thinks he is all the time, I should establish my glory forever before God and man." Although Austria had played an inglorious, if not discreditable, part during the Crimean War, satisfying neither Russia nor the allies, Buol acted as if the Congress existed simply to advance Austrian interests. "To listen to Buol," Orloff remarked to Cavour, "you would suppose that the Austrians had taken Sebastopol." In addition to his offensive haughtiness, his reputation for slyness and insincerity made him the least popular of the members of the Congress.

His companion, Count Alexander Hübner, Austria's ambassador at Paris, was more than a routine diplomat, but in no sense a great personage. He was careful, tenacious, correct, and very official, and although he did not lose his temper — as Buol sometimes did — he took little pains to disguise the fact that he represented 'the highest Court in the world.'

The Russian chief was Count Orloff, the oldest of all the plenipotentiaries, a soldier who had served in the Napoleonic wars. The jovial member of the Congress, he professed to know nothing about diplomacy, but only what Russia wanted, and he indulged constantly in pleasantries. He played to perfection the rôle of old soldier as it was then conceived, being bluff, hearty, naïf, but possibly his openness and his outspokenness served as a blind to a nature much more subtle than some of his colleagues divined. Baron Brunnow, his second, had been trained in the Russian bureaucracy. He provided the precedents and statistics to support the mighty Orloff's decisions.

The Piedmontese envoys kept themselves in the background. Cavour, the Piedmontese prime minister, watched every move, in the hope that it might lead to some benefit for oppressed Italy. He spoke little at the sittings; but he worked incessantly out of the Congress to win over to Italy the sympathy of the great world, political, diplomatic and social. His associate, Count Villamarina, proved himself a wide-awake assistant.

Of the Turkish envoys, Aali Pasha, the grand vizier, was a man of thorough Occidental training, while Mehemed Djemil Bey, the Turkish ambassador at Paris, knew from experience the ways of the Western Powers. Both were competent practitioners of that Oriental brand of statecraft, in which their Christian competitors had long believed, whether justly or not, the *craft* predominated. It is interesting to note that in the concourse of great aristocrats the Turkish grand vizier was the only self-made man. He was born a poor plebeian.

Such was the group of cabinet Jupiters who faced each other during nearly seven weeks around Walewski's green table and decided the fate of Europe. We may sum up their cross-purposes briefly thus. England and Austria strove to cage Russia, in order to keep her from controlling the Black Sea, or encroaching on Turkey, or imperilling Constantinople. France, having emerged from the cage in which the Congress of Vienna locked her, nominally sided with England, but Walewski and most of the French court wished to let Russia off easy. Austria coveted territory on the Lower Danube and desired conditions which would spread her influence in the Balkans. Piedmont would have liked to see the Danubian principalities, Wallachia and Moldavia, united, and given to the Duke of Modena, thereby securing the annexation of Modena to Piedmont: but Cavour wisely refrained from pushing any such claim, lest it might justify the suspicion that Piedmont had entered the Crimean War in order to

aggrandize herself. Turkey needed only to sit still, while her friends worked for her: their interests and hers coincided in essentials.

The protocols of the sessions are as dispassionate as a laundry list. To understand the real conflict between the envoys, we must turn to private memoranda. Those men, who look so dignified in their high collars, black stocks, and English frill of side-wiskers, knew that they were fighting for the future of their respective countries. They left nothing undone which might help them to win. Not policies merely, but the temperaments of the negotiators influenced the proceedings. On one occasion, when Walewski asked a question which Buol did not relish the latter "grew hot all over and went off like a fusee." Walewski, in truth, was the surprise, not to say butt, of the Congress. After he had uttered some unusually startling impropriety, if his back was turned, Benedetti, the demure secretary, "raised his eyes to heaven, held his head in his hands, shrugged his shoulders and uttered discreet sighs." "Then," continues Hübner, "a smile went round the table, while our president, without perceiving the ill-repressed hilarity of the audience, continued to lose his way in phrases empty, or compromising to the cause he was pleading."

The fiercest personal clashes, however, occurred when the envoys let themselves go in the meetings of the small committees or in the private interviews where much of the real business of the Congress was settled. Intrigue, persuasion, eavesdropping,

went on at the breakfasts and dinners, at the balls, plays, and receptions, in the drawing-rooms and even in the boudoirs. For the female lobbyist — some duchess, perhaps, or some adventuress under the protection of a high personage — played a recognized part in the political manoeuvres of the Second Empire. The emperor himself received in his cabinet a constant stream of aggrieved or suppliant envoys, whom he treated with tact, as he wished them all to convey to their governments the impression of his power and his good-will.

Thus on March 22, Walewski caused the British plenipotentiaries to be shown into one room, the Russians into another, and the Prussians into a third, while he himself passed from one to another. "Clarendon and Cowley at last withdrew, protesting that they could take no further part in such a travesty." The next day Clarendon had an audience with the Emperor, "who was much discomposed, and undertook to make Walewski understand that he must act in concert with the British plenipotentiaries. Business went on far better after this."

In spite of Buol's airs, and Walewski's official primacy, Clarendon seems to have been the dominant figure in the Congress. No one consorted with him more assiduously or to better purpose than Cavour. The British grandee hardly understood that while he sat stroking his chin and listened to the startling suggestions of the little man from Turin, he was actually being probed, and at the same time inoculated with Italian ideals.

Two events diversified the routine of the Congress. On March 16, Palm Sunday, Empress Eugénie gave birth to the Prince Imperial. Two days later, the Congress, with the diplomatic corps and other bodies, called at the Tuileries to congratulate the emperor. "We filed past the cradle of the child, who has beautiful blue eyes," writes Hübner. "The grand cordon of the Legion of Honor was thrown over his coverlid."

That same day (March 18) the Prussian delegates entered the Congress. They had been excluded at first because Prussia had remained neutral during the Crimean War, thereby cutting herself off from the right to take part in the discussion of peace terms by the belligerents. She was suspected of being more than friendly to Russia, and, as the antagonist of Austria in the Germanic Confederation, it was assumed that she would badger her rival as much as possible. When, however, the Congress proceeded to revise the treaty of 1841, which concerned the protection of the Black Sea, Prussia, as a signatory to that treaty, was invited to attend. She sent as her envoys Baron Otto Manteuffel, president of the Prussian ministry, a bureaucrat of the pre-Bismarckian era, who had helped to strangle the efforts of the Liberals in 1848. His strength lay in details of administration. His colleague, Count Maximilian Hatzfeldt, was another excellent representative of the Prussian bureaucracy. Having served in the Prussian embassy at Paris, and married a Frenchwoman, the daughter of Marshal Castellane, he

was fitted to supply Manteuffel's lack of acquaintance with the personnel of the Parisian world and with the local atmosphere.

The Prussian envoys entered the Hall of the Ambassadors amid a profound silence. The Congress had just had a sharp altercation, because Walewski insisted that they should be counted as being present from the opening. Walewski's purpose is not quite clear, unless his motive was by this cheap and sly method to please Prussia. Clarendon, however, uttered an irrevocable No; Cowley backed him up; the other members acquiesced; and 'those gentlemen' were admitted on the understanding that they should express no opinion on the questions decided or to be decided.[1] The coming of the Prussians rather increased the irritation which a month of discussion had produced. "Everybody is on edge," Hübner records on March 20. "It is time to sign."

Berlin has never been a school for manners. A barbarian survival in the Prussian strain renders that people not only backward in urbanity themselves, but also blind to its usefulness in others. They take it to be a sign of weakness. Their ideal Prussian negotiator was Brennus, who cut discussion short by throwing his sword into the scales. Manteuffel and Hatzfeldt, true to their stock, tried to bully their way through the Congress; but being met by men whom they could not browbeat, they threatened to quit and go home. Thereupon Cowley, on behalf of the English, French, and

[1] This accounts for the two protocols of March 18.

Austrian members, gave them their ultimatum, which, says Hübner, "they accepted with very good grace."

So the last fortnight wore fretfully away. On Saturday, March 29, the draft of the treaty was read. The next day, Quasimodo Sunday, all the plenipotentiaries, in court costume, came to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at noon. Walewski was a little late, as his wife had been confined during the preceding night. M. Feuillet des Conches, head of the protocol office, handed each chief envoy a copy of the treaty; then, while M. Feuillet read, the envoys followed to see that all was correct. That done, a feather, plucked from a black eagle in the Jardin des Plantes, was used as a quill to sign with. There being twenty-eight documents, however, requiring three hundred and ninety-two signatures, ordinary pens were soon substituted for the eagle's quill, which was presented to Empress Eugénie. At half past one, the treaty was signed and a messenger hurried with the news to the emperor. Soon a salvo of a hundred and one guns boomed from the Hôtel des Invalides. Clarendon proposed that the plenipotentiaries should pay their respects to the emperor, and as the procession of court carriages drove through the Rue de Rivoli to the Tuileries, crowds thronged the route. "Everybody greeted us with effusion," writes Hübner, "and many persons, men and women, shed tears of joy."

That afternoon Lord Clarendon wrote Queen Victoria: "Your Majesty may feel satisfied with

the position now occupied by England — six weeks ago it was a painful position here, everybody was against us, our motives were suspected, and our policy was denounced; but the universal feeling now is that we are the only country able and ready, and willing, if necessary, to continue the war; that we might have prevented peace, but that having announced our readiness to make peace on honourable terms we have honestly and unselfishly acted up to our word. It is well known, too, that the conditions on which peace is made would have been different if England had not been firm, and everybody is, of course, glad *even here* that peace should not have brought dishonour to France."

Clarendon did not write boastfully. That the negotiations turned out so well, from England's point of view, was due largely to him. He told Greville that " he had been able to accomplish his task by being ready to incur responsibility at home, and by being able to act unfettered, and taking on himself to disregard any instructions or recommendations from home that he did not approve of." The queen wished to reward him by making him a marquis, but he declined. His wife agreed with him. " I would not change the fine historical and much-loved name of Earl of Clarendon," she writes in her journal, " for all the marquisates in the world."

Although the treaty was signed, the Congress continued to sit for a fortnight longer, in order to dispose of several outstanding subjects which did not properly come within the scope of the treaty.

This later business, as events proved, had much significance.

On April 8 came the most spectacular session of all, in which, during a discussion of the general state of Europe, Clarendon attacked the outrageous Papal government, and proposed that it should be secularized. "No! no!" shouted Buol and Hübner. Walewski, under instructions from the emperor, attacked the monstrous régime of Ferdinand II — 'Bomba' — at Naples. Then Cavour, in a speech sober in form and impassioned in substance, spoke for Italy, warning the Congress that there would never be real peace in Europe until the wrongs of the Italians were redressed. For the first time at any official gathering of European statesmen, Italy as a potential nation was championed. The Austrians protested: they replied sarcastically to their opponents, and tried to have all mention of this discussion expunged from the protocol. But the other plenipotentiaries voted for its inclusion. There the record stands, to mark the foreshadowing of a new epoch in European political combinations and a great moment in Cavour's career.

Before adjourning, Walewski urged that they should emulate other congresses by adopting a declaration which should constitute a notable progress in international law. "The Congress of Westphalia," he said, "consecrated liberty of conscience; the Congress of Vienna, the abolition of the negro slave trade and the free navigation of rivers." He suggested that they should lay down

the bases of a uniform maritime law in time of war. His suggestion was followed, and resulted in the Declaration of Paris, which contained four articles. "1. Privateering is and remains abolished. 2. The neutral flag covers enemy goods, with the exception of contraband of war. 3. Neutral goods, except contraband of war, are not liable to capture under an enemy flag. 4. Blockades, to be binding, must be effective — that is, maintained by a force really sufficient to prevent access to the enemy's coast." [1]

On April 18 the Congress was dissolved, having achieved its first purpose — peace — but only a fragile peace. This Congress, like that of Vienna, registered the views of the governing body in Europe; that body was despotic. Austria, Russia, and Turkey were absolute monarchies; so was Prussia, despite its pretense of constitutionalism. France was in the control of a despot who used any prop at hand to keep him in an upright position. England and Piedmont were liberal, but in both the upper classes shaped the national destiny. The time was, and is, far off when the monarchies of Continental Europe should be administered for and by their people.

Napoleon would have liked the Congress to revoke the ban on his family; but he was shrewd enough not to push the matter. The Congress sat at Paris, under his auspices as host: what better proof could be produced that in fact the doctrine of legitimacy had lapsed, the Bonapartes were rehabilitated, and France restored to her high estate?

[1] Protocol of April 16, 1856.

In this sketch I have not attempted to analyze or discuss the terms fought for by the Western Powers and resisted by the Russians: for my purpose is simply to describe the personnel of the Congress and its method of procedure, with such touches interspersed as may vivify it for a reader today. Even Bismarck admitted some years later that Russia had been unjustly dealt with, and he uttered no minatory protest when, during the Franco-Prussian War, she denounced that section of the Treaty which limited her naval equipment in the Black Sea.

In conclusion, I borrow a final extract from Hübner's journal, to which I have often referred, both on account of its intrinsic interest and because, so far as I am aware, it has never appeared in an English translation.

"Lord Clarendon," he writes, "is the type of the English diplomat of the Palmerston school. He is always conscious of the power of Britain, does not hesitate to call things by their proper name, and flares up in earnest at any obstacle he finds in his path. He has knocked poor Walewski about in fine fashion. . . .

"I always like to do justice to adversaries. But Cavour has displeased me. In the Congress he exerted himself to appear modest. Only in the sitting of April 8, when Walewski, in spite of him, saw fit to throw the firebrand of Italy's affairs among the plenipotentiaries, he found courage — with the knowledge, if not with the approbation of the emperor — to attack Austria openly, whom

he never ceased to attack secretly outside the conferences. The fact is that the Tuileries and the Palais Royal were the true theatre of his activity during the continuance of the Congress. Strongly upheld by Prince Napoleon [Plon-Plon], secretly undermined by Walewski, he could not always be satisfied with the emperor, who vacillated forever between his good and evil instincts, between his desire to cause himself to be accepted by the sovereigns and his fear of compromising himself with the [revolutionary] sect. I am assured that he made life hard for Piedmont's prime minister, and that the latter quitted Paris displeased and full of vexation. His person lacks distinction. One feels, one sees, one recognizes in him the conspirator."

John Morley, writing fifty years later, remarked that the only persons who showed far-sighted calculation in the Crimean business were Cavour and the Turk.

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THE CONGRESS OF BERLIN

THE CONGRESS OF BERLIN

By ROBERT HOWARD LORD

AMONG the great historic assemblies of its kind, the Congress of Berlin had the most restricted sphere of action. Unlike the Congress of Vienna, it undertook no general reconstruction of Europe; even more than the Congress of Paris, it held itself — officially, at least — to the consideration of one clearly defined group of questions. But if the issues in 1878 were fewer, they were, perhaps, more complex and difficult than on these former occasions. The Congress of Berlin was called to regulate the thorniest and most dangerous question in the whole range of European politics — the Eastern Question; and that at the end of the worst cataclysm which that question had yet produced. Its task was the more delicate because, unlike the preceding congresses, it was not convoked at the close of a general European war, which left one or more of the great Powers defeated and begging for peace, and the rest of them exhausted by their exertions and therefore inclined to compromise. In 1878 the only one of the great Powers that had just been at war, emerged from the contest flushed with triumph; the other great Powers appeared at the Congress with their strength fresh and unimpaired, and several of

them were armed and in no mood for tame submission. The Congress of Berlin was called, therefore, not so much to end one war as to avert another. Its office was to dictate terms to the victors rather than to the vanquished. It is notable as the only occasion in the nineteenth century when the Concert of the Powers has been strong enough to bring a victorious belligerent to the bar of Europe and oblige him to submit the results of his victory to the judgment and revision of a congress. As an affirmation of the solidarity of Europe, of the principle that important changes in Europe are matters of European concern and not to be effected without the sanction of Europe, the Congress of Berlin is a unique and striking phenomenon. But as a demonstration that the councils of united Europe are inspired with wisdom, justice, or even common sense, the events of 1878 are not so gratifying. Even more than its predecessors, the Congress of Berlin has left a dubious reputation. On the one hand, its work has been lauded as the wisest diplomatic transaction of modern times; but, on the other hand, it has been said that "no diplomatic performance has ever resulted in such general dissatisfaction."

As everyone knows, the meeting of the Congress of Berlin was the result of the Russo-Turkish war of 1877 and of the ensuing diplomatic intervention of the other Powers. Russia had undertaken that war in the name of justice and humanity, in the spirit of a crusade. After the Bosnian revolt and the massacres in Bulgaria, after the Concert of

Europe had failed pitifully in its effort to obtain from the Turks, by diplomatic means, serious reforms and guarantees against further outrages in the future, Russia alone had had the courage to draw the sword in order to end an intolerable situation. Her enterprise might fairly be called the most just and necessary war undertaken in Europe in the nineteenth century. At the close of the struggle, while announcing that the other Powers should have a voice in the final resettlement of the Balkans, Russia felt herself entitled — and, indeed, obliged — to impose a preliminary treaty of peace upon her prostrate adversary. It is difficult to see how she could have done otherwise. For, since the main cause of the war had been the persistent refusal of the Porte to defer to the will of Europe, it was impossible to terminate hostilities without securing binding guarantees that in the impending negotiations for a final settlement the will of Europe would not again be thwarted by the obstinacy of the Turks. It is true that some objections may be raised to the precise terms of the treaty. The boundaries of the new Bulgaria, while conforming in the main to the best ethnographic information then available, were too extensive. The treatment of Rumania was somewhat ungenerous. The provisions with regard to the western half of the Balkan Peninsula could not have lasted long; indeed, they were not intended to, but Russia was precluded from attempting a permanent settlement in that half of the peninsula by regard for the wishes of Austria.

But, allowing for the circumstances of the moment and the avowedly provisional character of the instrument, one may accept without too much qualification the recent dictum of an English writer that "the Treaty of San Stefano was the wisest measure ever prepared for the pacification of the Balkan Peninsula." Had the other Powers been actuated only by disinterestedness, moderation, and foresight, they would then have assembled in congress resolved, at the least, to confirm the essential arrangements of San Stefano, to stipulate analogous arrangements for the western half of the peninsula, and to provide for the collective guardianship of Europe over the organization and free development of the liberated nations.

Even before the Treaty of San Stefano — before the outbreak of the war, in fact — Russia had repeatedly promised that the definitive settlement of all questions of general European interest arising out of the war should be effected with the participation of all the Powers. When Austria, in February, 1878, proposed that this participation should take the form of a conference, the Tsar readily assented. Soon afterwards it was agreed that in order to lend greater solemnity to the proceedings, the assembly should be raised to the dignity of a congress; all the Powers were to be represented by their leading ministers; and the place of meeting was fixed at Berlin, as the seat of a government assumed to be disinterested and impartial.

But it was impossible to go into the Congress without a preliminary agreement among the

Powers as to the basis and nature of the work to be done there. Although the assumption has recently been made in some quarters that a peace congress may work effectively without any understanding in advance as to the fundamental questions at issue, still everyone familiar with politics knows that public and formal discussions cannot be conducted with any hope of a successful outcome, unless an agreement on the chief questions has previously been arrived at. History shows that conferences and congresses have almost invariably met for the purpose of registering decisions the substance of which has been agreed upon beforehand.

In 1878 the meeting of the Congress was very nearly prevented by the difficulties that arose in the way of such a preliminary understanding. The fundamental question was whether the task of the future Congress should be to confirm and complete the solution of the Eastern Question outlined at San Stefano, or whether it should undertake to tear up that treaty and to 'annihilate the results of the war.' The latter course would doubtless have suited the wishes of England and Austria. For, unfortunately, the British government was still obsessed with the traditional chimaera of maintaining the independence and integrity of Turkey, not, indeed, for love of the Turks, but because the vital needs of the British empire were supposed to require it. The court of Vienna was eager to make acquisitions without having done anything to deserve them, and also ambitious to substitute itself for Russia as the dominant Power in the Bal-

kans. Hence for three months the meeting of the Congress was postponed, and the peace of Europe seemed to tremble in the balance, while England, Austria, and Russia were diplomatically fencing, trying each other out to see how far each would go in defence of his particular standpoint. How serious the danger of war was, it is difficult to estimate, for undoubtedly there was a good deal of 'bluffing' on all sides. At any rate, it was Russia who first showed signs of weakening. Exhausted by the unexpectedly arduous struggle she had just undergone, ill-prepared to risk a new war in which she would presumably have found England, Austria, Turkey, and Rumania arrayed against her, disappointed, too, in the hope of receiving any effective support from Germany — despite the assurances of undying gratitude and unstinted devotion which Bismarck and his master had so often lavished upon the Tsar — Russia at length turned to her principal opponent, England, with the offer to sacrifice a large part of the Treaty of San Stefano. The outcome of the negotiation was the three secret Anglo-Russian conventions, signed at London on May 30, which contained the most important features of the later Treaty of Berlin. It was to the credit of both sides that each had made large concessions: it was not so creditable, however, that they sought to keep their agreements from the knowledge of the other cabinets (save Germany). If it was essential to the success of the Congress that the two states principally interested should come to a working agreement in

advance, it was at least highly desirable that the discussions of the Congress should not be turned into a farce, and the other Powers led into grave miscalculations or suspicions, by sham debates over questions already clandestinely decided.

But this did not exhaust the precautions of Lord Beaconsfield's secret diplomacy. As a corrective to the concessions just made to Russia, the London cabinet pushed through the secret Convention of Constantinople (June 4), which provided for a perpetual Anglo-Turkish alliance for the defence of the Asiatic possessions of the Porte, assigned to England the island of Cyprus as an immediate reward for her future services, and bound the Sultan, in agreement with England, to make the necessary reforms in his Asiatic provinces.

On June 6 another secret convention was concluded between Great Britain and Austria, by which the latter promised to support England at the Congress in the Bulgarian question, while England, in return, agreed to uphold any proposition Austria might make with regard to Bosnia and the Herzegovina. The court of Vienna had also taken its precautions in other quarters. It had made sure that neither France nor Russia would oppose its designs upon these two provinces; and as for Bismarck, if he did not originally suggest this acquisition to Austria, at least, for two years back, he had never ceased to urge her to seize these provinces without ceremony.

The main obstacles having been cleared away by this extraordinary series of ententes and con-

ventions, early in June Bismarck sent out to the Powers who had signed the Treaty of Paris the invitation to meet in congress to submit the work of San Stefano to free discussion and the necessary revision. France had already laid down the condition, which had been accepted by the other Powers, that the Congress should take up only those questions which arose directly and naturally out of the late war. The object of this reservation, of course, was to exclude from discussion questions regarding certain outlying provinces of Turkey, such as Egypt, Syria, or Tunis, whose status France did not desire to see altered at that time.

The Congress met at Berlin on June 13. None of its predecessors, not even the Congress of Vienna, had brought together a more illustrious company of statesmen. Turkey, indeed, was unfortunate in her spokesmen — "a Greek, a renegade, and an imbecile," Bismarck rudely characterized them — but it made little difference, for they had been summoned to the Congress only to sign away provinces. M. Waddington and Count Corti, the first plenipotentiaries of France and Italy respectively, earned general respect and confidence by their reasonableness, tact, and a perhaps undiplomatic honesty. A much more important rôle was reserved for Count Andrássy, the Austrian foreign minister: a striking figure with his scarlet uniform, his sparkling black eyes, hair curling about his face, upturned mustache, and the general appearance of a gay hussar; but also an eloquent speaker, a clever tactician, and

a master of the more occult arts of diplomacy. The leading antagonists in the impending battles, however, were the representatives of Russia and England. The first plenipotentiary of Russia was the octogenarian chancellor, Prince Gorchakov — bent, thin, so feeble that he had to be carried into the hall of sessions, but still preserving the courage and dexterity, the exquisite grace and distinction, the command of polished and sonorous phrases, the high-flown and somewhat theatrical eloquence, to which he owed his great reputation. The hardest part of the work of the Russian mission naturally devolved upon the second plenipotentiary, Count Shuvalov, a handsome, brilliant, and immensely active diplomatist, whose conciliatory spirit and readiness to make concessions were largely responsible for the success of the Congress. On the English side, Lord Salisbury played much the same rôle as Shuvalov: Lord Beaconsfield was the worthy counterpart of Gorchakov. 'Dizzy' was, indeed, the stormy petrel of this Congress. If he did not, as *Punch* prophesied, arrive at Berlin with a large military escort, keep an ironclad on the Spree, attend the Congress with cocked hat, a brass band, and revolvers, enter singing "We don't want to fight, but by Jingo if we do," draw caricatures of the emperor of Russia on the blotting-paper, and wave the Union Jack continually over the head of the president; at least he provided most of the sensations of the Congress: he assumed from the start a defiant, irritating, and uncompromising tone, threatened that if he did

not get what he wanted, he would go home, and kept the assembly down to the last in constant uneasiness lest he should stagger them by some new and unexpected theatrical stroke.

But the dominating figure at the Congress was Bismarck, its president. Guiding the discussions with rare skill and tact and with a certain good-humored but compelling brusqueness, holding in his hands the threads of all the secret negotiations that went on behind the scenes, he did, to a large extent, earn the beatitude of the peacemakers and his chosen title of 'the honest broker' by his constant efforts to mediate, to reconcile opposing standpoints, and to ensure the success of the Congress. On the other hand, it must be said that owing to his extreme impatience to finish quickly, an impatience largely justified by the shattered state of his health — he himself has related that he was obliged to drink a jug of port before every session, in order to keep up at all — he insisted on hastening matters too precipitately. He drove the Congress along by strokes of the whip, as the brow-beaten Turks related. Doubtless a slower procedure would have led to a less superficial settlement. Moreover, it was not to the advantage of the Congress that the man who, above all others, controlled its decisions, was a statesman who regarded the 'interests of Europe' as a mere empty phrase; who viewed the Christian races whose fate was to be settled, not only with supreme indifference but with unconcealed contempt; who took no interest in the Eastern Question whatever, except in so far

as it affected the mutual relations of the great Powers; and who therefore strove to exclude every question which did not affect those relations, as an idle waste of time. At all events, Bismarck held such a position at this Congress as can be paralleled, perhaps, only by that of Metternich at the Congress of Vienna. Not without reason he is said to have jested: " Le Congrès, c'est moi."

In its external settings, the Congress had little of the splendor or the exuberant social life that had distinguished or distracted its predecessors. It might have been said that this prosaic Congress " marche mais ne danse pas." There were, indeed, scarcely any social diversions, except for a few formal receptions at court and some entertainments at the various embassies. Rumors circulated that the city council of Berlin, after much consideration and reconsideration of the weighty subject, might perhaps be induced to contemplate the possibility of inviting the assembly to a luncheon in the grand hall of the Rathaus; but in these high hopes the Congress was disappointed.

While in 1814–15 thousands of persons of every description had flocked to Vienna to 'see the Congress,' the assembly of 1878 passed off almost unnoticed by the Berliners; and the only visitors who came, apart from the tribe of ' special correspondents,' were the representatives of the downtrodden or the newly emancipated races of the East and the agents of various other deserving ' causes.' Among the latter one may note the delegates of the *Alliance israélite*, who had come to plead the cause

of their oppressed kinsmen in the Balkans, and to whose exertions the so-called 'Liberty of Conscience' articles in the Treaty of Berlin were largely due. A committee of the Peace Society also appeared to lay before the Congress the question of international arbitration. Bismarck decorously promised to bring their petition to the attention of the high assembly — and, of course, nothing more was heard of the matter. As the London *Times* commented, "the presence of the delegates of the Peace Society at Berlin must have had something of the effect of a Quaker deputation in the midst of Choctaws or Iroquois accoutred for the war-path." It is scarcely necessary to add that the Congress did nothing whatever to meet the hopes voiced in some quarters that it would take up the cause of Poland, discuss the problem of Socialism, or take the first step towards the reduction of armaments. For it was characteristic of this Congress that, in contrast to the two preceding ones and in deference to its president, it carefully avoided every larger issue, every humanitarian question, any attempt at building up the law of nations. The age of force had arrived, and the Iron Chancellor did not believe in 'European interests.'

Although the most elementary rules of justice would seem to have required that the representatives of those Christian states whose vital interests were at stake should participate in the Congress with at least deliberative voice, nevertheless that privilege was denied to them. The delegates of

Serbia and Montenegro were not even allowed to enter the assembly to state their case. The Greek and Rumanian envoys were privileged to set forth their national aspirations briefly before the Congress; but it was understood that they were to be "entendus, mais pas écoutés," and it is recorded that while the Greeks were pleading the cause of their country, "Beaconsfield, Salisbury, and Waddington slept the sleep of the just." The great Powers did not intend to allow their deliberations to be embarrassed by the presence, the prayers, or the remonstrances of the small states.

Precisely what went on behind the so rigidly barred doors of this august conclave, it is difficult to know. The sources at hand — the cut-and-dried protocol, the memoirs and letters of the diplomats present, the guesses of the newspapers — do not permit us to follow in detail the inner history of the Congress of Berlin. At all events, we probably know the general course of things.

The Treaty of San Stefano served as the basis of the discussions. All the more contentious questions were settled outside the Congress at private meetings — usually meetings between the plenipotentiaries of England, Russia, and Austria, with whom Bismarck kept in close touch. Ordinarily the formal sessions of the Congress served chiefly to register and sanction what had been decided upon outside. Hence many of the great oratorical contests recorded in the protocol were only sham battles; Lord Beaconsfield's 'magnificent fight' before the Congress on the Batum question was

mainly histrionic; and some sessions may be described as elaborately staged comedies of which the plot had been fixed in advance, the rôles assigned and rehearsed, and practically every episode agreed upon by general consent beforehand. Often, however, the assembly got out of control, and the waves of debate ran high. When Lord Beaconsfield arose to "defy somebody," when Shuvalov discharged a Parthian shaft, or when Prince Gorchakov flung his paper-knife upon the table and angrily gathered up his papers as if to leave the room, then Bismarck had to exert all his powers to pour oil on the waters. If worst came to worst, he summoned up his last reserves by declaring himself thirsty and inviting assembled Europe to adjourn for an hour to sample the contents of his famous buffet.

The hardest battles, of course, were fought in the private conferences referred to above. Although the chief questions that were to come before the Congress had been decided in advance by the Anglo-Russian conventions, still various secondary problems — such as the limits and the organization of the two Bulgarias — afforded material for violent contests, and, indeed, very nearly led to the break-up of the Congress.

Although the story has sometimes been denied, I think there is ample reason to believe that at a critical moment — about the twentieth of June — Lord Beaconsfield presented his demands to the Russians in the form of an ultimatum, and then ordered a special train to Calais, intending to go

home, dissolve the Congress, and risk a war, in case, as he assumed, his terms were not accepted by the twenty-second. And this was not by way of 'bluffing,' as is commonly said, but in earnest, and in accordance with an agreement previously made with the Queen. Bismarck, learning of the special train, and realizing the gravity of the situation, intervened and persuaded the Russians to yield. The Congress was saved, but it is painful to reflect that the peace of Europe was thus endangered merely in order to win for the Sultan the right of keeping garrisons in Eastern Rumelia and fortifying the passes of the Balkans, two privileges of which the Turks were never to make any use and which were not worth the paper on which they were written. This was what the London newspapers called a "glorious success," "which deprived Russia of the greater part of the results of the war"; a case of "Russian insinuating eloquence encountering the firm force of English resolve." Doubtless it was a famous victory.

If the Congress weathered this crisis and some lesser ones, it was because most of the Powers were sincerely anxious for peace. Europe was wearied of the incessant wars of the past generation, and in this respect, if in no other, the assembly admirably reflected the wishes of the public. But keeping peace meant that the Congress had to proceed by what the newspapers called 'courageous compromises,' i. e., bargains in which the rights of the various races of the East were regularly sacrificed to the ambitions or the alleged interests of the great

Powers. In the midst of these sordid transactions, considerations of principle, justice, and consistency were lost from sight. Although the expediency of reconstructing the map of the Balkans along national lines was admitted by everyone when it suited his purpose, still that principle had to give way whenever 'political' or 'strategic' or 'commercial' interests of the great Powers could be adduced against it. Lord Beaconsfield and Count Andrássy insisted on splitting the Bulgarian nation into three parts in order to ensure the existence of a strong Turkey. The same statesmen then tore away from the Porte three provinces (Cyprus, Bosnia, and the Herzegovina) which the Peace of San Stefano had left to it, with the brazen explanation that they hoped thereby to strengthen Turkey by assisting her to "concentrate and condense" her resources. But when the Greeks presented themselves with the request that they too might be allowed to help in this new method of invigorating Turkey, Lord Beaconsfield informed them that they had utterly mistaken the purpose of the Congress: they seemed to imagine that it was to partition the Ottoman empire, while nothing was further from the thoughts of the high assembly. In short, the principles invoked varied incessantly with the needs of the moment. At this Congress, as at earlier ones, it was the interests of the great Powers that took precedence over every other consideration.

Apart from the transactions later embodied in the Treaty of Berlin, the diplomatists found time

for many other bargains and confidential agreements of a more or less formal nature. Thus, for instance, on July 10, after Count Andrássy had pointed his pistol at the head of Serbia and informed her that unless she agreed to his terms she should get nothing whatever from the Congress, the Serbian envoy at Berlin signed a convention with Austria, which was intended virtually to place the railway and tariff system of the little principality under the control of its great neighbor. On July 13 the versatile Austrian minister signed two more secret agreements, the one with Turkey, the other with Russia: both related to Bosnia and Novibazar, and the one practically nullified or abrogated the other.

In the last days of the Congress, after the publication of the Cyprus Convention had directed the excited attention of the diplomats to the Mediterranean situation, numerous confidential discussions took place with regard to the fate of the outlying dependencies of Turkey in that region. In order to calm Waddington's indignation over the seizure of Cyprus, Beaconsfield and Salisbury informed him that France might do whatever she pleased with Tunis: England would not oppose her. Bismarck is said to have seconded this suggestion to the French, while at the same time he was offering this same Tunis to the Italians. Salisbury, on the other hand, appears to have tried to divert Italian ambition to Tripoli. We also hear of an informal Anglo-French agreement to preserve the status quo in Egypt and Syria, despite Bismarck's exhorta-

tions to the British to appropriate Egypt for themselves. It is curious, but not surprising, to see the German chancellor, who was then so ostentatiously engaged in saving the peace of Europe, also exerting himself so busily to sow seeds of discord for the future. He declared later that it was to Germany's interest that France and Italy should fall out over Tunis; and he is said to have prophesied that Egypt would be for France and England what Sleswick-Holstein had been for Austria and Prussia. These 'conversations' have a considerable importance, for here, for the first time, it appears, the impending partition of North Africa was clearly outlined and widely discussed. The Congress of Berlin thus forms a landmark in the history, not only of the Eastern Question, but also of the colonial expansion of Europe.

The treaty which crowned the labors of the Congress was signed on July 13. It would be superfluous to enumerate here the provisions of the Treaty of Berlin: but it may not be out of place to consider briefly, in the light of that treaty, how far the Congress had proved adequate to its task.

In the numerous and sometimes extravagant eulogies that have been showered upon this assembly, its claims to the gratitude of the world are usually based upon the following arguments. (1) The Congress averted a disastrous European war. (2) By sanctioning the independence of Rumania, Serbia, and Montenegro, and the autonomy of Bulgaria, and by according appropriate extensions of territory to all the Christian Balkan states, the

Congress gave recognition to the principle of nationality as none of its predecessors had done; it satisfied the essential interests of all the states and races of the peninsula, and opened up a bright new era in their history. (3) Forsaking the traditions of most previous treaties, the Congress embodied in the public law of Europe the principle that the Sultan was under pledge to the great Powers in respect to the good government of all the dominions that remained to him. (4) By imposing the principle of complete religious freedom and religious equality upon the Balkan states, the assembly performed a great act of justice, and earned the title of 'the Liberty of Conscience Congress.'

All of this is in a measure true, but for a correct appreciation of the Congress it is necessary to point out that nearly all the commendable provisions of the Treaty of Berlin come straight from the Treaty of San Stefano. The diplomats at Berlin improved upon the Russian treaty in only two important respects: (1) in securing for all the Powers, instead of for Russia alone, the right of watching over, and assisting in, the execution of the new arrangements in the Balkans; (2) in imposing, with greater emphasis and with stronger guarantees, the principle of religious liberty. With regard to the latter point, however, the Congress was probably actuated less by zeal for religious freedom than by deference to the Jewish bankers, whom the statesmen at Berlin could not afford to defy. There was a newspaper story that Bismarck agreed to work for religious liberty at the Congress on condition that the Berlin

Jews agreed to support the Conservative candidates at the impending elections; and whether the story is true or false, nothing would have been more characteristic of the statesman who recognized no 'principles,' but only 'interests,' in politics.

Apart from these two restrictions, all the good things in the Treaty of Berlin were simply the confirmation, grudgingly and reluctantly given, of the provisions of San Stefano. This 'great deliverance of the Balkan Christians' was the work of Russia, and of Russia alone, and the Congress merely sanctioned so much of it as for very shame it dared not refuse. With the exceptions already noticed, wherever the Congress altered or supplemented the work of San Stefano, it only made matters worse. The dismemberment of Bulgaria; Lord Beaconsfield's naïve belief that he could keep this sundered nation apart by the childish device of calling Southern Bulgaria 'Eastern Rumelia'; the hybrid, artificial, and "ingeniously inexpedient" organization given to this latter province; the confining of Greece to such narrow limits that that kingdom could only remain "a centre, not of national development, but of national conspiracies"; the ignoring of the desires of the Serb race for national unity; the bestowal upon Austria of Bosnia and the Herzegovina, with the results so familiar to us today; finally, the restoration of nearly half of what it had lost to a government which was admittedly the disgrace of Europe, and in whose will or ability to reform no one could any longer seriously believe: such are some examples of the wisdom, justice, and

foresight with which the diplomats at Berlin discharged their mission.

And all this was the more lamentable because it could so easily have been avoided. At that time the proper solution of the Eastern Question, at least with regard to the Balkan peninsula, was already clear to all reasonable and unprejudiced men. That solution was, of course, the organization of the peninsula (Constantinople excepted) into independent Christian states, with the demarcation of frontiers based as far as possible upon the nationality of the population. As a French publicist wrote not long after, this inevitable solution might have been accelerated or definitively established at the moment of the Treaty of San Stefano. "Turkey, prostrate at that time, submitted to everything; she accepted the Russian treaty, which freed the Slavs from the Danube to the Aegean; Europe might have intervened to complete the work of liberation begun by . . . Russia. Europe did intervene, but only in order to place the results already gained in question, to postpone to a distant and uncertain epoch the solution which might have been effected then without delay and without difficulties."

Why did the Congress of Berlin make such bad work of it? Because the Powers who controlled the Congress were callous to suffering and bloodshed, and indifferent to the rights and aspirations of the lesser nations, when these things interfered with what they considered their interests. Because these Powers held artificial and inflated concep-

tions of what their interests demanded. Because Count Andrássy imagined that the security of Austria required the dismemberment of the Serb race; and Lord Beaconsfield imagined that the security of India depended on the dismemberment of the Bulgarian race and upon England's upholding the worst government in Europe. Because morbid fears and groundless suspicions and sheer jingoism precluded certain Powers from any understanding of Russia's standpoint and Russia's splendid work; so that Lord Beaconsfield would refer to the crusade of liberation which Russia had just completed only as " that fatal and disastrous war," while the British Tory press could see in it nothing but " selfish ambition," " lawless cupidity," and " barbaric lust of conquest," and British journals gloated that " it was well to teach the Autocrat of all the Russias and the Bashkirs that he cannot pursue his conquering career unchecked, in the fashion of a Genghis Khan or a Timur Leng." In a word, the great fault of the Congress of Berlin, as of so many congresses in the past, was the failure to recognize that the peace of Europe is not ensured nor the interests of any Power permanently served by creating unnatural, unjust, and intolerable conditions; the failure to recognize that even in international politics justice is, in the long run, the surest foundation of states and nations.

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CLAIMANTS TO CONSTANTINOPLE

CLAIMANTS TO CONSTANTINOPLE

By ARCHIBALD CARY COOLIDGE

FEW people would deny that among the questions pending in the terrible balance of the present war, the future status of Constantinople and of the Straits that give access to it is one of the most important. This was not so apparent in the early days of the struggle, but the entry of the Turks into the conflict and the ill-fated expedition against Gallipoli, as well as the events that have happened in the rest of the Balkan Peninsula, have once more awakened the interest of the world in the old and ever recurring Eastern Question. We now know officially what had indeed been intimated before, that Russia has been promised by her allies, as part of the fruits of victory, the possession of the city which has so long excited the ambitions of her statesmen and the dreams of her people.

Countless writers have described the unequalled situation of Constantinople at the meeting place of two continents, with its splendid inner harbor, the Golden Horn, and with the Sea of Marmora as a lake of its own which can be closed to any foe by whoever holds possession of the Straits, the famous Bosphorus and Dardanelles. Napoleon I declared that Constantinople was in itself worth half an

empire. But obvious as the advantages of the situation are, they have not told equally at all periods of history. In the Greek and Roman world, the old town of Byzantium did not hold a particularly notable place. For centuries it was inferior to the neighboring inland cities of Nicaea and Nicomedia. Constantinople itself since its founding in 330 has always been the capital of an empire and usually of a considerable one, but it has been affected not only by the fortunes of the state to which it has belonged, but by events and influences of a more general nature. It benefited in the seventh century from the closing of the Red Sea route by the Arabs, which stimulated the overland trade from Central Asia and from the Persian Gulf across Asia Minor. It also gained by the Christianization of Russia and the resulting increased intercourse with northeastern Europe. On the other hand, the renewal of direct relations between western Europe and Egypt and the East after the Crusades was disastrous to it, as it was thus left to one side of the main routes of travel; and it suffered another blow to its prosperity from the Tartar conquest of Russia in the thirteenth century. The imperial city, when the Turks became masters of it in 1453, presented but a shadow of its former greatness. Since that day, as the capital of the Ottoman empire, it has shared in the fortunes of that empire, waxing with its rise and waning with its decline. But, though Constantinople has derived little benefit as yet from the enormous development in the last century and a half of the

lands about the Black Sea, its political and military importance has grown ever greater, for it holds the outlets to their sea-going commerce; and as the junction where that commerce crosses the new overland line from Hamburg to the Persian Gulf, it bids fair to become more important still.

Since Emperor Constantine, not far from sixteen hundred years ago, founded the city that bears his name, it has been besieged some fourteen times by foreign foes and threatened on many other occasions. In all these years, it has been captured by them only twice: once by the Latin Crusaders in 1204, after a feeble and inefficient defence, and again in 1453, after a glorious resistance against overwhelming forces in perhaps the most famous siege in history. During the first half of its existence as the Turkish capital, it was the headquarters of a growing empire which threatened its neighbors, not one which was threatened by them; in the second half, it has been the capital of a state which has continually lost territory and one whose partition has often been discussed. The work of the Rumanian historian, T. G. Djuvara, *Cent projets de Partage de la Turquie* (Paris, 1914) gives an idea of how many heirs have been suggested to the possessions of the sick man of Europe, and how Constantinople has been assigned on paper to all sorts of different powers, including France, Venice, and the Pope. Once more, and perhaps not for the last time, the question of its future has been raised. As might be expected, a number of solutions have been recommended and the conflict of interests

between the different claimants is acute. Let us consider briefly who these claimants are and on what grounds their claims may be said to rest.

We note, to begin with, that the question of the wishes of the inhabitants themselves can hardly be taken into serious consideration. At almost every stage of its history, Constantinople has been a cosmopolitan city, and this has never been truer than since it has been under the Ottoman empire. We have no real statistics as to the ethnical composition of its population at the present moment. Not only the events of the war but those of the few years previous have influenced the proportion of the different elements. We can only say that recently the town has had a population of perhaps 800,000 to 1,000,000, of whom some 400,000 were Turks, 150,000 or so Greeks, about as many Armenians, nearly 50,000 Jews, and the remainder a mixture belonging to all sorts of other nationalities both European and Asiatic. The inhabitants of the surrounding country on the European side are, or recently were, many of them Greeks; on the Asiatic side, the Turks have predominated.

The first and at the present outlook not the most unlikely solution of the question of Constantinople, at least for the time being, is that the Turks should remain as before the owners and the masters of the city and of the Straits. There are certain advantages to this. *Beati possidentes* is usually the easiest way out of any territorial dispute, especially when compromise is impossible between other conflicting and more radical proposals. The Turks will never

again be a serious menace to the Christian world or to any considerable portion of it, nor will they even be a power of the first rank. It will always be possible, therefore, to put pressure on them and to keep them in tolerable order. With all their faults, they have been a ruling race, and — though opinions differ on this point — some authorities claim that they are more fitted to deal equitably with the mixed population under their control than the various other elements of that population would be to deal with one another if any one of them should obtain the supremacy. At any rate the Turks have the rights of an undisputed possession of more than four centuries and a half, and though these rights are regarded by the allies as forfeited, they cannot be overlooked except after complete victory.

A solution that has been suggested many times and still has advocates in western Europe, is that Constantinople and a small extent of territory on each side of the Straits should be made a free state, with the proper mixture of self-government and of control by the Powers. This idea is at first sight attractive. It seems fair to every one and in harmony with the most enlightened principles. The picture of a neutral, thriving, commercial emporium where all the elements live in concord and none enjoys special privileges, where the great nations of the world are deeply interested but none desires to dominate, where the Straits which have been the scene of so much history and the cause of so much bloodshed will henceforth be unfortified and wide open to the peaceful trade of mankind, is

one that appeals to the imagination. The difficulty is that it is too imaginative. Modern democratic government is not so successful that we can easily conceive of the elements that compose the present population of Constantinople administering all their own affairs. Still less can they be entrusted with the management of the vast interests of others. It is not that they lack intelligence — many of them belong to highly intelligent races — but with their religious and national feuds, their age-long hatreds and rival aspirations, with the demoralizing effects of centuries of servitude, and their total lack of previous political training and of civic standards, they will need firm control, at least for some time to come. This control must be that of the Powers.

But here experience does not justify optimism. International control of any kind is a difficult and delicate matter at best. The men who have to exercise it come from foreign states and are almost certain to be suspicious of one another, for they serve two masters. Each of them represents a nation, whose interests, rather than those of the people he is supposed to look after, are likely to be his first care. We may admit that there are a few examples of reasonably successful international control. The most notable of these perhaps is that of the navigation of the Danube; but though that affects important political as well as commercial interests, it is far less complex and difficult than the regulation of the Straits, which also concerns the actual administration of a considerable and

very varied population. Condominions of even two powers have difficulty enough in working smoothly — witness the experience of England and France in Egypt — combinations of several are likely to become more unworkable with the accession of each fresh member. In neither the Far nor the Near East has the concert of the Powers been sufficiently successful to make us sanguine about its efficiency as a permanent institution of government where important conflicting interests are involved. Constantinople under such a régime would be an ideal hotbed for intrigue of every kind between rival financial interests, rival nationalities, and representatives of rival great powers, and probably a scene of widespread corruption. At the best, there would be much likelihood of administrative stagnation, for where many jealous interests are involved, it is easier to block progress than to introduce reforms, however desirable. We must remember also that international law has not yet reached the stage when any great power, where its vital interests are concerned, regards the decision of the majority of the others as binding upon itself. Russia, for instance, could hardly let any mixed government at Constantinople pass even police rules which she regarded as a real hindrance to her Black Sea trade.

Another point, whose difficulty is not sufficiently appreciated by those who favor a free city of Constantinople and free commerce for all through the unfortified Straits, is the distinction between times of peace and times of war. In times of peace it is

practically certain in any event that commerce will be but little hampered and that there will be no discrimination of tolls. Whether the Straits are fortified or not does not matter, but in time of war it does matter, and matter a great deal. Unfortified straits could easily be seized by a quick stroke at the outset of hostilities. In a war between Russia and another power, there might be a tremendous temptation to both parties to make a dash for the Straits, enough of which might conceivably be occupied and held by a small force of men, with a combination of barbed wire and floating mines, to seal up the whole Russian trade in the Black Sea on the one hand, or, on the other, to close all entrance and render nugatory any maritime preponderance on the part of her enemies. It would, indeed, be hard to imagine Russia respecting the letter of the law under such circumstances and equally hard to blame her seriously for not doing so. To be sure, such proceedings might be forbidden by international compact and come under the ban of a league to enforce peace, and in return the Straits might be closed by international agreement in war time to the fleets of all nations, but could Russia regard such an agreement as an adequate protection to her commerce and ports ? The immense damage that could be inflicted upon her in a few days would be a temptation to an enemy that might well outweigh the value of any international intervention against the transgressor. To take a similar case, do we in the United States feel that an international guarantee would be sufficient to secure the Panama Canal

against Japanese attack if we should have war with Japan ? The peril for Russia in an unfortified Bosphorus and Dardanelles would be equally great, treaties to the contrary notwithstanding. Or again, how much protection would the neutrality of the Suez Canal and its legal accessibility to all nations even in war time, guaranteed as they are by treaties, furnish to a German U-boat that should be found there tomorrow ?

If the Turks have the rights of the actual possessors of Constantinople, the strongest historical claim is that of the Greeks. Ancient Byzantium was a Greek settlement, and Constantinople itself from the time it was founded was for over eleven hundred years a Greek city. Even under Turkish rule the Greeks have been the largest element in the very considerable Christian population, and the hope of regaining the town that was so long theirs has never been quite abandoned by them. The national awakening that led to the War of Greek Independence was not a movement merely to free ancient classical Greece, but rather one for the resuscitation of the Byzantine empire. The first actual insurrection took place, not in Greece, but in Rumania, where, strangely enough, the small number of Greeks hoped, however vainly, for the support of the rest of the population. After the War of Independence had come to an end and Greece proper had been freed, the majority of the Greek people were, to their bitter disappointment, left still subject to Turkish rule. But the Greeks are a highly imaginative and sentimental people;

second only to their pride in the glories of the past is their hope of a brilliant future. 'The Great Idea,' as it was called, was still strong in the breasts of the Greeks both within and without the kingdom till late in the nineteenth century. This dream meant a new Byzantine state with a Greek Constantinople, which state should include, as it had in the past, various foreign elements contentedly living under Greek rule and superior civilization.

In the course of the nineteenth century, the growth of the consciousness of the other Balkan nationalities, and especially of the Bulgarians, old enemies of the Greeks, made the fulfillment of 'the Great Idea' ever less and less probable; though even now it is not entirely abandoned, at least as far as Constantinople is concerned. When the present king of the Hellenes came to the throne, it was suggested that he should take the title of Constantine XIII, thus proclaiming himself the successor of Constantine XII, the ill-fated prince who died heroically when the Byzantine empire fell. The Greeks, too, resented the intimation, said to have been given them at one time during the present war, that their troops even as allies could not be allowed to approach Constantinople. Never indeed has the fulfilment of 'the Great Idea' looked less likely than at the present moment. It should be remembered, however, that if Constantinople becomes a free state, Greek is likely to be its official language and the one spoken by the majority of the population, especially if, as we may expect, many of the Turks and other Mohammed-

ans leave. The world, therefore, may after all see Constantinople again in the hands, not of Greece, but of Greeks.

Their ancient foes, the Bulgarians, have no historical claim on the city, much as they have desired to obtain possession of it at times in the past. Twice they have besieged it — in the ninth century, when they made their first appearance in the Balkan Peninsula, and again in the tenth, when they were at the height of their power. But if they have no historical claim, they have an excellent geographical reason for desiring the place. Now that Bulgaria has shores on both the Black Sea and the Aegean, the northern coasts of the Straits and of the Sea of Marmora seem a bit cut out of the Bulgarian coastline and spoiling its continuity. Constantinople would be a magnificent acquisition for the Bulgarians, and though but few of them are to be found there at present, in time they could doubtless colonize it and make it in every way an integral part of their possessions, realizing at last the dreams of a thousand years ago. This possibility naturally appeals to them, and we may well believe that their statesmen cherish hopes of the sort, though hardly for the immediate future. In the war of 1912, for a moment it seemed as if the Bulgarians after their decisive victories over the Turks might enter the imperial city in triumph. Had they done so, they would have hoped to remain. It is still a question whether it was Turkish resistance at Chataldja or pressure on the part of Russia that put an end to the Bulgarian advance.

In 1915 the news, or the suspicion, that France and England had consented to the occupation of Constantinople by Russia as a result of the present war, provoked much feeling in Bulgaria, and was doubtless one of the motives that influenced her to throw in her lot with the Central Powers. As matters now stand, next to the Turks the Bulgarians would probably be the German candidates for its possession.

Serbia has been too far away to have been a real aspirant for the succession, even if some Serbian patriots have dreamed of a southern Slav state, that is to say, a predominately Serbian one that should extend to the Straits. The Serbians themselves have never penetrated thus far. Their greatest sovereign, Stephen Dushan, at the time of his death in 1355 was preparing for a campaign against Constantinople, and Serbians and some western writers have declared that but for his decease the history of the East would have been changed and the Turks would have been driven out of Europe. Such assertions are easier to make than to prove.

The Russian claims to Constantinople are numerous and weighty. They are both sentimental and practical, they are based on historical traditions, on the national sentiment and aspirations of the Russian people and on geographical, political, and economic reasons of ever growing importance.

To begin with the sentimental reasons, we must remember that as soon as the Russian state was constituted, and even sooner, the Russians began to look to the south. Descending the rivers that flowed into the Black Sea, they attacked the

Greeks more or less seriously again and again. One of their rulers in the tenth century was so pleased with the lands he had conquered in the Balkan Peninsula, that he proposed making them his headquarters and residence for the future. This design he was forced to give up only after hard fighting with one of the ablest of the Byzantine emperors, who did not relish having such a formidable neighbor so near his capital. It was from Constantinople that Russia got her religion, and with her religion many of her clergy, for a considerable period, also her introduction into civilization and all her earlier culture. To the Russian world, Constantinople long had an importance the same in kind, if not in degree, that Rome had for western Christendom. When the Byzantine empire fell, the Russians found themselves the last independent people in Europe belonging to the Greek — to them the only orthodox — church. All their brethren in the faith were then under the rule of foreigners, either heretics or infidels. No wonder that the legend grew up that as Constantinople had been the second Rome on the Bosphorus, so Moscow was the third, the legitimate successor to the two elder capitals of the world. The princes of Moscow, as might be expected, favored this idea. One of them, Ivan the Great, not only adopted the Byzantine double-headed eagle for his coat of arms, which has remained that of Russia till today, but he married a Greek princess, the niece of the last Byzantine emperor. Since that time, the desire to reërect the cross on the ancient cathedral, now the Mosque of

St. Sofia, has been a Russian aspiration which has varied in intensity at different periods, but which in the course of the ages has grown stronger rather than weaker. For the Russian people every Turkish war has been a crusade. In the cosmopolitan days of the eighteenth century, the Empress Catherine II might plan a revived Byzantine empire provided her grandson should rule over it, but in these more nationalistic ones, the thought that Russia shall some day succeed the Turk on the shores of the Bosphorus has become a part of the popular creed. In this respect, Russian rulers and statesmen have lagged behind rather than led public opinion. They have seen the difficulties that were involved in an aggressive policy, and some of them have doubted the advantages to be obtained from a realization of the national aims.[1]

But apart from sentimental considerations, reasons of the most practical nature have pointed out with increasing force to the statesmen of Petrograd the importance of the Straits. Peter the Great began his extraordinary career by an attempt to get a footing on waters leading to the Black Sea. By his capture of Azov he succeeded for the moment; but he was obliged to surrender his prize after his unsuccessful war with Turkey a few years later. It was not until the reign of Catherine II that the Russians were able to establish themselves on these

[1] Prince Bismarck was convinced, or at least more than once declared, that the possession of Constantinople would weaken rather than strengthen the Russian empire. It is true that he made the same sort of an observation in regard to the German possession of Helgoland.

coveted coasts. They proceeded at once to build a fleet, but as it had to meet enemies who could get help from outside while it could not, it seldom had an undisputed supremacy, a fact that has often hampered the Russians in their Turkish campaigns. Conversely, under the existing international regulations regarding the Straits, they were unable to send their Black Sea fleet to the Far East during their conflict with Japan.

Meanwhile, in the course of the last century and a half, southern Russia has undergone as complete a transformation as our own West. The wild steppes, the former home of the Tartar and of the Cossack, have become some of the chief wheat producing lands in the world. Many towns have grown up, and there is now a large and in some places even a dense population. The city of Odessa alone has over 600,000 inhabitants. All the rivers of southern Russia empty into the Black Sea, except the Volga, which is connected with it by a railway and some day may be by a canal. The whole foreign trade of this region, the immense Russian export of wheat, as well as that of oil and of other products from the region of the Caucasus, reaches the western world by sea only by passing through Turkish waters in passages controlled by Turkish guns. The more the vast country has been developed, the more Russian commerce has grown, the greater have been the inconveniences and disadvantages of having its outlet at the mercy of the politics of the Ottoman empire. It has been even more serious than a foreign owned Panama Canal

would be to the United States. The Turks temporarily closed the Straits at the time of the war between Italy and Tripoli and again during the Balkan wars, and again in 1914 before they actually joined with the Central Powers, each time causing heavy losses to Russian commerce. At this moment, when France and England are having difficulty in finding sufficient grain to meet their urgent wants, there are huge quantities of Russian wheat locked up in the Black Sea and doomed to remain so until peace is once more restored or the Turks are driven from Constantinople. The object lesson to Russia of the importance of the control of the Straits is drastic. Mere freedom will not be enough for her; as long as she is not able actually to close what she regards more and more as the door of her house, so long will she have to keep up a fleet in the Black Sea and to spend millions on the fortification of her harbors against possible attack by an enemy with a navy superior to her own, and yet be in danger of having her door hermetically sealed from outside at any time. To sum up then: from almost every point of view, the control, that is to say the possession, of these passages is of transcendent importance to Russia, and this her allies have realized, and have promised that if they are victorious she shall receive it.

The concern of Germany, not only of Austria but of all southern Germany, in the question of the Straits, was long due almost entirely to the fact that the Danube, the upper half of which is German, empties into the Black Sea. As the trade of

this splendid navigable river has increased and as the populations along its banks have grown and developed, the Black Sea and the passages leading into it have come to mean more and more to Austria and Germany. At various times in the past Austria has had thoughts of extending her territory to the eastward by the annexation of Rumania and thus becoming directly a Black Sea power, but she has made no serious attempt to carry out such a policy. She has, however, especially since the days of the Crimean War, regarded herself as a state with interests which must be consulted in Black Sea questions, including those of the Straits.

Modern Germany at first showed little interest in the politics of the Near East. Bismarck's views on the subject are well known. It is only since the accession of the present emperor that the policy of peaceful penetration of the Ottoman empire has been followed, at first on a small scale, later with ever increasing energy, breadth of vision, and realization of its importance. Germany has thus succeeded to the place, formerly held by England and France, of protector of the Ottoman empire against the encroachments of Russia. She has proclaimed herself the one great power that has never taken Turkish territory and never had designs on any, whose only aim has been close economic relations equally favorable to both parties. For twenty years before the outbreak of the present war, German influence at Constantinople was becoming more and more the dominant one, politically as well as commercially. Since about the

beginning of the present century, the most interesting and picturesque feature of the German plan of action has been the Bagdad railway, the main line of which, according to latest reports, is nearly completed. Starting at Constantinople, it should in time not only connect Central Europe with Bagdad, but should extend down to the Persian Gulf, with branches towards Persia and India to the east, and towards Syria and Egypt to the west. Unwelcome as this enterprise has been to Germany's rivals, it has been a fine conception, perfectly legitimate in itself, and we can understand the increasing interest that it has excited in Germany.

The events of the present war have much heightened this interest. The Germans have now lost almost the whole of their colonies, and it is doubtful whether they will regain them. On the other hand, their policy and arms in the Near East have so far been generally successful.[1] These two sets of facts have reacted on German feeling. The Germans have seen the fragility of their colonial dominion and their inability to defend it against England, but they believe that in this day of world empires every great state needs a large mass of territory at its own disposal, to furnish it with raw material for its industries, with a field for the employment of its capital, and a population to buy its manufactures. They now dream of a unified Central Europe and Western Asia, an area whose different parts shall be under different but closely allied governments, and shall constitute an eco-

[1] Written before the fall of Bagdad.

nomic unity, with well on to two hundred million inhabitants and vast and varied resources, extending from the North Sea to the Persian Gulf. To many Germans this seems the one chance to assure themselves of their place in the sun, to give themselves the room that they need for the unhampered development of their energies and abilities, to secure permanently among the world powers the position to which by their achievement in peace and war they are legitimately entitled.

Whatever may be said for or against this vision, it is evident that in its realization Constantinople plays a part of the first importance. The train from Berlin to Bagdad must pass through or near Constantinople, and at this point it will cross the great stream of the Black Sea trade, a meeting place that should be one of the chief commercial stations in the world. Thus the question of who shall control the station and the highways of passage north and south, east and west, becomes more critical than ever. We can see that if Russia should get possession of them the project of a German union from the North Sea to the Persian Gulf would be shattered beyond repair. On the other hand, a German Constantinople, or a Turkish one directed and controlled by Germany, would prove a barrier to Russian aspirations more formidable than that of the Turks at the height of their power. The seagoing commerce of southern Russia, the Caucasus, and Central Asia would pass through German waters, through gates that could be opened or closed at any time according to the good will of

the Germans. Thus the fulfilment of either the Russian or the German dream can only be achieved by the ruin of the other.

This would seem to drive us back to some other solution if we hope for a compromise of any kind. We may imagine what would be the rivalry between the German and the Russian agents in a free city. It has been suggested in the past that, small as the disputed territory is, it should be divided. For instance, Napoleon I, as a last concession to his ally, Tsar Alexander I, was willing that Constantinople and the Bosphorus should go to the Russians, provided that France might hold the Dardanelles. This the Russians refused. From their point of view, although the possession of the Bosphorus would enable them to defend the Black Sea better than they can today, its exit would be closed just as effectually by a foe holding the Dardanelles alone as by one that held both passages. Rather than have a great state establish itself there, they preferred and would prefer the present weak holder for the whole region, and Germany has the same feeling with respect to Russia to an even greater degree. Other divisions have been suggested: for instance, that some one state should hold the European side and another the Asiatic side of the passage, and even that Constantinople itself should be divided between the different claimants. Perhaps the next proposition will be that the Russians shall have Constantinople and the Straits, and the German railway shall go under them somewhere by a tunnel.

Be all this as it may, we can see that the problem is one that can never be solved in a manner agreeable to all parties concerned. We can look at it from many points of view and feel some sympathy with the most diverse aspirations. At the present moment the predominant feature in the situation is a very new thing in the hoary Eastern Question, the clash between the interests and we may say the legitimate ambitions of Russia and Germany, a clash where both sides have much at stake, where a compromise will be difficult to reach and to maintain, and where a complete victory for either means a blow of great severity to its antagonist. Never in all its long history, save perhaps when it fell into the hands of the Turks in 1453, has the fate of Constantinople meant more to the world than it does in the present struggle.

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